

CLAIMS:

1. An apparatus (2) for reading data from a data carrier and for processing such read data, comprising:

- reading means (21) for reading data to be processed and for reading a data identifier identifying said data from said data carrier (1),
- 5 - transmitting means (22) for transmitting said data identifier to a central database (4) requesting further information related to said read data,
- receiving means (23) for receiving a response message from said central database, which message comprises an address of an information database (51) storing said further information, and
- 10 - processing means (26) for processing said further information received from said information database (51) and requested from said information database (51) while using said address received from said central database (4).

2. An apparatus (2) for reading data from a data carrier and for processing such read data, comprising:

- reading means (21) for reading data to be processed and for reading a data identifier identifying said data from said data carrier (1),
- transmitting means (22) for transmitting said data identifier to a central database (4) requesting further information related to said read data,
- 20 - receiving means (23) for receiving a response message from said central database, which message comprises said further information requested by said central database (4) from an information database (51) storing said further information, and
- processing means (26) for processing said further information received from said information database (51) via said central database (4).

3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein said response message from said central database (4) also comprises an address of the information database (51) storing said further information.

4. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said central database (4) and said information database (51) are servers connected via a network, in particular servers connected via the Internet.

5. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said reading means (21) is operative to read data representing a block of audio information and to read a data identifier identifying said block of audio information from the data carrier (1).

6. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 5, wherein said further information comprises data representing a block of audio information and wherein said processing means (26) is operative to reproduce said block of audio information.

7. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said processing means (26) is operative to display information on a monitor of a computer.

8. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein said transmitting means (22) is operative to transmit an apparatus identifier identifying the apparatus and/or a carrier identifier identifying the data carrier (1).

9. An apparatus (4) for storing address data comprising addresses of information databases, said information databases storing further information related to data stored on data carriers, said apparatus comprising:

- receiving means (41) for receiving a data identifier identifying said data stored on a data carrier from an apparatus (2) reading said data and said data identifier from said data carrier (1), and

- transmitting means (42) for transmitting a response message to said apparatus (2), which message comprises an address of an information database (51) storing said further information.

10. An apparatus (4) for storing address data comprising addresses of information databases, said information databases storing further information related to data stored on data carriers, said apparatus comprising:

- receiving means (41) for receiving a data identifier identifying said data stored on a data carrier from an apparatus (2) reading said data and said data identifier from said

data carrier (1), and

- transmitting means (42) for transmitting a response message to said apparatus (2), which message comprises said further information requested from said information database (51) using said data identifier.

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11. An apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein said response message to said apparatus (2) also comprises an address of an information database (51) storing said further information.

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12. An apparatus as claimed in claim 9 or 10, wherein the apparatus and said information database (51) are servers connected via a network, in particular servers connected via the Internet.

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13. An apparatus as claimed in claim 9 or 10, also comprising information collection means (44) for collecting information concerning the requests for further information from the apparatus (2), in particular using said data identifier, an apparatus identifier identifying the playback apparatus and/or a carrier identifier identifying the data carrier received from said apparatus (2).

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14. An apparatus as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein said data carrier (1) is a digital data carrier, in particular a CD, DVD, SACD or flash card.

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15. An apparatus as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein said address of the information database (51) comprises the Internet address, in particular the URL, of said information database.

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16. An apparatus as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein said data identifier comprises a title identifier identifying a title of the data to be read from the data carrier (1), in particular a title of a piece of music or video.

17. A method for reading data from a data carrier and for processing such read data, comprising the steps of:

- reading data to be processed and a data identifier identifying said data from said data carrier (1),

- transmitting said data identifier to a central database (4) requesting further information related to said read data,
- receiving a response message from said central database (4), which message comprises an address of an information database (51) storing said further information, and
- 5 - processing said further information received from said information database (51) and requested from said information database (51) while using said address received from said central database (4).

18. A method for reading data from a data carrier and for processing such read data, comprising the steps of:

- reading data to be processed and a data identifier identifying said data from said data carrier (1),
- transmitting said data identifier to a central database (4) requesting further information related to said read data,
- 15 - receiving a response message from said central database (4), which message comprises said further information requested by said central database (4) from an information database (51) storing said further information, and
- processing said further information received from said information database (51) via said central database (4).

19. A method for storing address data comprising addresses of information databases, said information databases storing further information related to data stored on data carriers, said method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a data identifier identifying said data stored on a data carrier (1)
- 25 from an apparatus (2) reading said data and said data identifier from said data carrier (1), and
- transmitting a response message to said apparatus (2), said response message comprising an address of an information database (51) storing said further information and/or comprising said further information requested from said information database (51) while using said data identifier.

20. A method for providing access to information databases, said information databases storing further information related to data stored on data carriers, said method comprising the steps of:

- receiving a data identifier identifying said data stored on a data carrier (1) from an apparatus (2) reading said data and said data identifier from said data carrier (1), and
- transmitting a response message to said apparatus (2), said response message comprising an address of an information database (51) storing said further information and/or comprising said further information requested from said information database (51) while using said data identifier.

21. A data carrier for storing data to be read and processed by an apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2 and for storing a data identifier identifying said data, said data identifier being provided for transmission to a central database requesting further information related to said read data and for reception of a response message from said central database, which message comprises an address of an information database storing said further information and/or said further information requested by said central database from said information database while using said data identifier, said further information received from said information database via said central database or requested from said information database while using said address received from said central database being provided for processing by said apparatus.

22. A data carrier for storing data to be read and processed by an apparatus as claimed in claim 1 or 2 and for storing a carrier identifier identifying the data carrier, said carrier identifier being provided for transmission to a central database.

23. A method according to claim 19 or 20, comprising the step of associating an address of an information database (51) with one or more data identifiers.

24. A method according to claim 22, comprising the step of requesting a fee from an operator of the information database in return for said associating.

25. A method according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the contents of the response message is dependent on whether or not the apparatus (2) reading said data is registered.